Enhancing the student experience through the use of NILE (Blackboard) templates

Where is Wally?

http://www.flickr.com/photos/sinsiwinsi/2055036353/

Rob Howe – 4th May 2018

University of Northampton

What is a Wally ?

wally

Pronunciation: /wali/

Definition of wally

noun (plural wallies)

British informal a silly or inept person: *I must have looked a total Wally but I didn't care*

Origin:

1960s: perhaps a shortened form of the given name Walter. There are many theories of the origin: one story tells of a *Wally* who became separated from companions at a 1960s pop festival; the name, announced many times over a loudspeaker, was taken up as a chant by the crowd

http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/wally

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Wally's Top Ten guide to creating Blackboard sites

Key principles:

- Students have it too easy
- They like a challenge
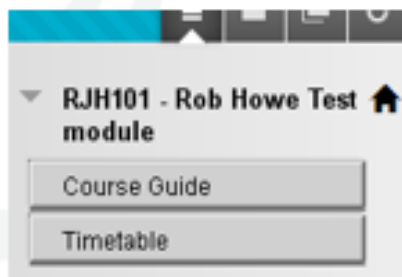- Don't make it too easy to find Wally

#10 - The Escher Site

Key principles:
Students are sent round and round without actually getting anywhere
Wally is never found !

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Course Guide

Timetable

Timetable

Timetable

Please refer to the Course Guide for details
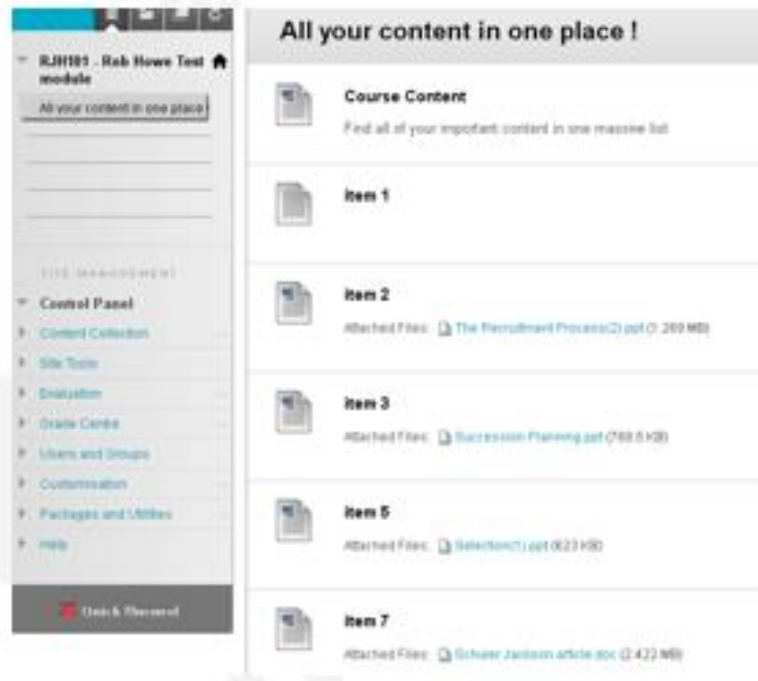
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#9 – The one click site

Key principles:
Everything on one page
Poor labelling of content
Wally will be the 300th item on the last page

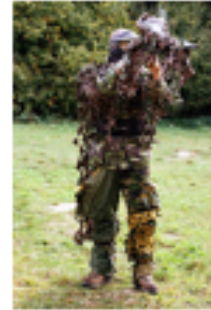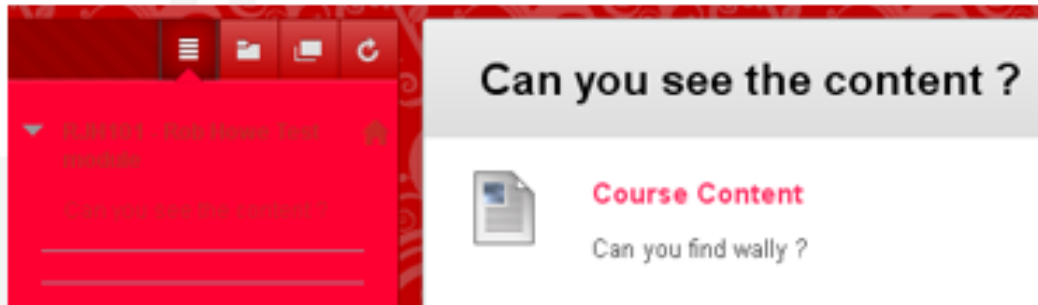# #8 – The camouflage site

Key principles:
Poor colour combinations
Wally is well hidden in the content

http://www.flickr.com/photos/razvanradu/3960121586/

Can you see the content ?

Course Content

Can you find wally ?

Wally Tip: Use red / green combinations for maximum effect with colour blindness.

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#7 – The Russian doll site

Key principles:
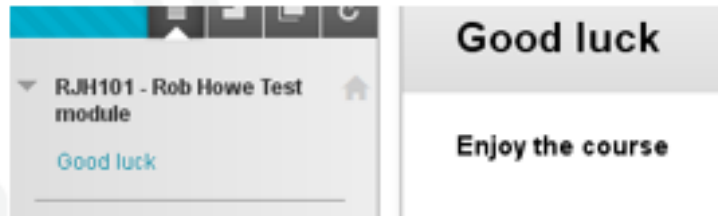Content within content
Wally will be found in the 15th embedded folder

#6 – The minimalistic site

Key principles:
No content (or at least none of any value)
Wally is not going to be found anywhere

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Good luck

Good luck

Enjoy the course

#5 – The overloaded site

Key principles:
Lots of irrelevant content
Reading List with 100s of items
Wally could be in somewhere in the mess

#4 – The Las Vegas site

Key principles:
Gaudy graphics (exploring course themes ?)
Poorly resized graphics
Students are distracted whilst looking for
Wally

#3 – The Spaghetti Junction site

Key principles:
Many routes – badly signposted
Not all routes will lead to Wally

Use this link ☐

No use this link ☐

This is really the link you need ☐

Essential content ☐

Very essential content ☐

Wally Tip: Ensure that you show links even if there is no content

#2 – The Outer Mongolian site

Key principles:
Obscure file types
You won't have the right program to access Wally

Use this link

Essential Wally document

Attached Files: 📄 R&TM module guide (FT).docx (866.488 KB)

You will need to have Mongolian Office 2020 (obscure release 1.3) in order to open this essential file. Please note you WILL be tested on the content of this file in the final exam !!!!!

Wally Tip: Raise stress levels by testing students on the content

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#1 – The Crazy Mirror site

Key principles:
There are reflections of documents that
are all slightly different versions
Which Wally is the right one ?
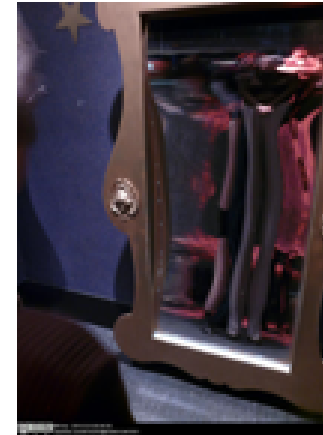
Which document is the right one ?

📄	Module Guide -Bob
📄	Module Guide - Final
📄	Module Guide Final - Bob
📄	Module Guide

The Northampton approach....

2011 – Consulted on standard items to include in a Blackboard site
2012 – First implementation of new site template for modules and courses
2013 – 2018 Audit, review and redesign of template

Results of NILE audit 2017

The audit revealed a generally improving situation for NILE sites with many meeting the basic level of the quality criteria for which the tutors involved should be commended.
There were a number of sites in all faculties which shared areas which could be enhanced or improved:

- Tutors should make use of the guidance for content and site material in the suggested areas to assist students with finding content.
- Where module guides were included in sites then these need to be updated and should be consistent with other content within the site.
- The contacts area should ideally include staff photos and all contact details for staff.
- Reading lists should make use of ASPIRE to ensure students can quickly access the relevant resources.
- Whilst colour schemes / themes were generally well used then subject areas may consider consistency if they vary from the NILE standard.

Benefits of a consistent template

Tutors have clear guidance on what to include
Tutors have contextual help
Better use of institutional tools (e.g. Talis Aspire)

Students will know how to find content
Less time spent searching – more time being efficiently used
Less confusion over content
Accessibility benefits

Students notice the difference...

"An effort has been made to present transparent readable material/s and attractive layouts."

"easy to navigate and search for the information needed for my assignment.."

"The new NILE is very stream lined and a massive improvement from earlier "models". Very user friendly and has all the info needed-including grades-on this single page. Brilliant!"

Wally's Top 5 Tips

1) **W**ork through your sites <u>as a student would</u>
2) **A**lign the site with standard designs
3) **L**ayout your site with a logical structure
4) **L**ist only the items which students really need
5) **Y**ou have control – don't waste the opportunity

Don't be a Wally (unless your name is Walter)

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